gramme content and formats are constantly reviewed and changes made so as to sustain viewers' interest.

Merger of foreign branches of nationalised banks

1086. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal is under consideration of Government for the amalgamation of foreign branches of Indian Nationalised Banks by the creation of a single bank to handle all foreign operations; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Utilisation of PL-480 funds

1087. SHRIMATI SUDHA VIJAY JOSHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact than an agreement has been signed with the United States Government regarding utilisation of funds presently held in deposits with Indian Banks arising out of PL-480 funds; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) An agreement was signed between India and USA on 7th Jan, 1987 for the setting up of a US-India Rupee Fund for Educational, Cultural and Scientific Cooperation. The initial capital of this Fund is approximately Rs. 127.5 crores. This amount has been provided from the interest bearing rupee holdings of the US Government presently with certain US Commercial Banks in India. The life of the Fund is 10 years. During this period the entire Fund is expected to be committed for mutually agreed collaborative activities between two Governments.

Resource mobilisation through public deposits by government undertakings

1088. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the present trend of government owned companies mobilising public deposits in big way which is effecting the growth of deposits in nationalised banks; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Reserve Bank of India to increase public deposits in the nationalised banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Raids conducted on the premises of senior government officials

1089. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of senior Government officials whose premises were raided during last year on account of possessing assets disproportionate to their known sources of income;

(b) the number of persons against whom cases were registered; and

(c) the value of goods seized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) to (c) During the period 1.1.1986 to 31.10.1986 the Income Tax Department conducted searches at the

premises of three Group 'A' officials which resulted in the seizure of *prima-facie* unaccounted assets amounting to Rs. 23.69 lakhs. During the same period, the Central Bureau of Investigation has reported 189 searches at the premises of officials of the Government/Public Sector Undertakings which resulted in discovery of assets worth approximately Rs. 396.97 lakhs.

Contraband imports of gold into India

1090. CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to "Gold-1986" published by Consolidated Gold Mines p.l.c U.K. the contraband imports of gold into India rose to 123.4 tonnes in 1985 against 94.5 tonnes in 1984 and 25.4 tonnes in 1981; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor and what action Government propose to take to prevent such huge contraband imports, despite the doubling of rewards for the seizure of illegal gold imports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) According to "Gold-1986" published by the Consolidated Gold Mines U.K., it was estimated that during 1985 new gold used for jewellery fabrication in India was to the tune of 123 tonnes as against 94.5 tonnes in 1984 and 25.4 tonnes in 1981 used for the same purpose. This is merely an estimate. Estimates made by other agencies abroad differs widely in this regard. There is no method of verifying the accuracy of such estimates as smuggling is a clandestine activity. No reasonable estimate of the quantum of gold smuggled into the country, is, therefore, feasible.

Gold continues to be one of the items sensitive to smuggling into the country due to its traditional demand and restricted supplies. The magnitude of smuggling of gold into the country is largely determined by the fluctuating profit margin as between the domestic and international prices of gold.

Amassing of Pak troops along India's Borders

1091. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD:
DR. BAPU KALDATE:
DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY:
SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV:
SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that Pakistan has been amassing troops, guns and ammunition along the Indian borders in the Western and Northern sectors and indulging in other military activities;

(b) if so, since when Pakistan has been carrying out these activities and what is Government's information about Pakistani intentions behind these activities; and

(c) what steps have been taken to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN SINGH): (a) and (b) Pakistan had moved the bulk of her troops close to the India-Pakistan border in end November 1986 under the pretext of taking precautionary measures against the movement of Indian Army formations in connection with Exercise 'Brass Tacks'.

(c) Our Armed Forces took the necessary steps to ensure full defence preparedness. Thereafter, talks with Pakistan were undertaken at our initiative, which have substantially de-